



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE PICTURE GALLERY OF THE HERMITAGE.—

## IV.\*

BY CLAUDE PHILLIPS.

---

To attempt any account of the Dutch "Small Masters," that is, of the famous *genre* painters of the seventeenth century, within such limits as those which here impose themselves, is to be reduced to despair. The Hermitage collection, crowded together on screens and walls in a single large gallery, is limitless in extent, and ends by exhausting even the most passionate lover of Dutch seventeenth-century art. Unrivalled in its groups of certain special masters, it is by no means always up to the same high level, and cannot in a good many instances be said to include "the pick of the basket." The same fastidious taste has not in all cases presided at the selection of the pictures in this section, which, for instance, makes the Berlin Gallery so enjoyable in this important branch, and gives charm to such exceptional groups of Dutch masters as those in the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace and in the Wallace collection. Leaving out of consideration the Ryks-Museum of Amsterdam, Van der Helst is nowhere as magnificently represented as he is here in the Hermitage. Works wholly exceptional in his *œuvre* are the great piece known as "La Présentation de la Fiancée," and the two less vast but still very important "Family Portraits," while a much less usual picture, "The New Market of Amsterdam," is authenticated by his signature and the date 1666. Absolutely unique and beyond rivalry by any other museum or collection is the group of paintings by Paul Potter. From the Malmaison comes the "Farm Scene"—often named as the masterpiece of the too short-lived animal-painter, and certainly one of his very finest things, although it cannot be said to surpass in quality the "Farm Scene at Sunset" in the Duke of Westminster's collection.

\*The publication of the concluding instalment of Mr. Claude Phillips's singularly interesting contribution has been unavoidably postponed, in consequence of the large amount of space required from month to month for the discussion of subjects of great and immediate concern.—Ed.

at Grosvenor House. Then we have, also from the Malmaison, the curious panel in fourteen separate compartments, "The Life of the Sportsman." In some of these there is deliberate and humorous imitation of the style and motives of certain contemporaries among the Netherlanders. The compartment with "Diana and Actæon" is actually by Cornelis Poelenburg, from which circumstance some critics have too rashly concluded that the curious composite painting remained unfinished at Potter's death. A rarity again is "The Wolf Hound," of quite life-size, and bearing the signature of the master. The group of three De Hoochs is interesting, though it cannot compare for a moment with those in the Ryks-Museum of Amsterdam, the National Gallery, the Wallace collection, and Buckingham Palace. Three distinct stages in the practice of the great *luministe* are here represented. Van der Meer of Delft, his only rival in the treatment of indoor light—his superior, perhaps, in the estimation of the modern connoisseur—is not represented at the Hermitage. His fame is of modern creation; when the Imperial collection was in the process of formation, his name had been well-nigh forgotten, and his works were distributed among other masters. One of the most interesting things in this section is a *genre* scene with a woman seated in the raised embrasure of a window, and seen in the act of spinning. A luminous background to her figure is provided by the large and unusually ornate window of stained glass. The picture, without any such close imitation as suggests the intention to deceive, recalls Pieter de Hooch, whose name must, all the same, be put aside. Those of Esaias Boursse and of Isaac Koedyck have been most frequently put forward in connection with this charming, if rather disconcerting, work. The former painter, who is often confounded with Vermeer of Delft, is best known by the signed picture in the Wallace collection, which is much colder in tone than the St. Petersburg example. The latter has, however, distinct points of contact with the "Woman Spinning" ascribed to Boursse in the Ryks-Museum at Amsterdam. All the same, the canvas which comes nearest in style to the Hermitage piece is Koedyck's "Interior" in the Antwerp Gallery. Hobbemas are scarce in all public and private collections except those of the United Kingdom, and the Director of the Hermitage, though he has long been striving to secure a fine specimen of the much-prized landscapist, can as yet catalogue

none among his treasures. Jacob van Ruysdael is, on the other hand, represented by no less than twelve canvases, three or four of which may take rank with his most exquisite things. Then we have thirteen works by Gerard Dou, six by Frans van Mieris, a good number also by the tiresome and mechanical Willem van Mieris, five Metsus, ten Jan Steens, six Terboechs, only one Adrian Van de Velde, one Jan van de Capelle, two seapieces by Willem Van de Velde, no less than nine examples of that hard colorist but subtle observer, Karel du Jardin. Of his contemporary, and, perhaps, master, the prolific Claes Pieterz Berchem, the Imperial Gallery possesses no less than sixteen, or taking into account one doubtful piece, seventeen specimens. The art of Jan Van Heyden, so exquisitely minute, yet so broad and luminous in effect, is in hardly any other gallery as finely illustrated as in that of the Russian Crown, which includes nine of his works, the greater number of which come from the Crozat and Malmaison collections.

The paintings of the Spanish school, to the exhibition of which one of the three vastest and most splendid galleries of the palatial museum is entirely devoted, is remarkably complete, rather than remarkably splendid. As regards the works of Velazquez, it stands far behind Vienna and the National Gallery. As regards the other seventeenth-century painters of the schools, its display compares on at least equal terms with that made by the Royal Gallery of Buda-Pesth, formerly the Esterhazy Gallery; no other European collection out of Spain being on equal terms with the two last-mentioned in this respect. By Morales there is, among other things, a "Mater Dolorosa," to an unusual degree moving and even great in the expression of passionate grief. For once this most unequal and most fantastic in exaggeration of Spanish sixteenth-century painters almost deserves his epithet of *El Divino*. A masterpiece in the class to which it belongs is the three-quarter length "Margaret, Duchess of Parma," by Alonso Sanchez Coello. A rare intensity of life, a dignity sovereign in its quietude, mark this singularly remarkable portrait, which one hesitates a little to leave to the very interesting, yet rather dry, Spaniard, who became the successful rival of portraiture of his master, Antonio Moro. It is noticeable that we have here already the inclined plane of which later on Velazquez will make so excessive a use. The Hispaniolized Vincencio Carducho—

really the Florentine Vincente Carducci—shows himself nevertheless in the “Ecstasy of St. Anthony of Padua,” one of the most markedly Spanish in character of those Italianizing masters who were so many during the early seventeenth century. His sweetness pushed to excess and the quasi-feminine charm of his style make of him a precursor of Murillo. These peculiar qualities are, however, even better seen in the great altarpiece, “The Virgin in Glory,” of the Buda-Pesth Gallery than here. Out of the tolerably numerous canvases ascribed at the Hermitage to Velasquez only two can be accepted as genuine. One is the tremendously forceful and life-like “Innocent X.,” a bust-portrait from the Walpole collection, identical, so far as it goes, with the surprising likeness of the Panfilì pope which in itself gives fame to the Doria Palace at Rome. The writer persists, notwithstanding the arguments of Herr Carl Justi and M. de Somof, in holding this to be not a repetition but a preliminary study from life for the Doria picture. The technique comes nearer to that of the original than does the handling of the exquisitely subtle “Innocent X.” at Apsley House, though the latter must count also as an original Velasquez. It resembles more closely still the working of the brush in the nearly identical bust-portraits of the master’s enfranchised slave Pareja, which are to be found at Castle Howard and Longford Castle, respectively. The only other original Velasquez is one which hangs in the gallery, but has not as yet found its way into the catalogue. This one of those early *bodegones* or kitchen-pieces, of which the typical examples are the *Aguador* in the Duke of Wellington’s collection at Apsley House and an “Old Woman Cooking Eggs” in that of Sir Francis Cook at Richmond. In the St. Petersburg piece two old men and a boy are seen at table.

The facile and charming art of Murillo is represented—disregarding doubtful pictures—by twenty examples of varying merit, but some of them of first-rate quality. It is too much the fashion, now that the sovereign mastery of Velasquez is everywhere recognized, to “run down” the facile and brilliant Sevillian, who once was borne on the very crest of the wave as regards popularity, but has now momentarily descended into the trough of the waters. Those who think it “modern” to assume an altogether contemptuous attitude with regard to an artist, superficial no doubt, yet in his way of extraordinary accomplishment, a little

forget his wonderful variety, his unerring if excessive elegance in composition, the true naïveté, the sympathetic quality, of his realism when he allows himself to face Nature at close quarters. His passion in sacred art is by no means merely false or self-conscious; it is the outcome of a quasi-feminine devotion, perfectly true as far as it goes, yet strongly contrasting with the virility of a Ribera and the austere passion of a Zurbaran.

The "Assumption of the Virgin"—one of the finest pictures of its class—is a composition superb in rhythm, and a painting which in handling shows that *vaporoso* quality so much admired by the artist's worshippers of a past time. Broader and more masculine in execution is the "Immaculate Conception." The "Vision of St. Anthony of Padua," which contains the first idea for the great picture at Seville, is beautified by a naïve and quite feminine tenderness not easily to be resisted, save by those who have deliberately steeled themselves against the ingenious charm of the painter. Two vast and masterly canvases from the celebrated sequence entitled "The History of Jacob," are "Jacob's Dream" and "Isaac Blessing Jacob." In the former the figures of the angels mounting and descending the ladder are drawn and composed with extraordinary skill. Another canvas belonging to the same series is the "Meeting of Jacob and Laban," in the collection of the Duke of Westminster at Grosvenor House. But the most moving, the most typically Spanish work in the whole gallery is the "St. Lawrence" of Zurbaran—a masterpiece of the painter, not less as a painting than as an expression of all-conquering faith. With a certain self-consciousness, with a certain sombre distrust of self belonging to the art which follows upon the Catholic Revival, the Spaniards of the seventeenth century, unlike the contemporary Italians, preserved in their conception of sacred subjects a freshness, a naïveté, an ardor, which were at that advanced period not to be paralleled by a corresponding mood in any other people. The more strange that their greatest glory, Velasquez, should have been so entirely without this inestimable power of embodying the true sacred passion! St. Lawrence, as he is imagined by Zurbaran, stands before the beholder in splendid vestments, holding the emblem of his cruel martyrdom. He is all human in his steadfastness and strength, but with a humanity touched already with the divine. His upturned gaze knows nothing of the spectator, his whole soul is

poured out in love and prayer. No taint of delight in self-torture, no merely hysterical passion, mars this wonderful effort.

Even more complete and remarkable than the collection of Spanish masters is that of the French painters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Of this the nucleus only is to be found in the Hermitage itself, the Imperial palaces in and near St. Petersburg furnishing a large proportion of fine pictures and filling up many gaps in the extended series contained in the museum itself. It would be a great advantage if some of the mediocre originals, and the flagrant copies which represent the Bolognese school were separated from the really fine things of the same class, and then promptly relegated to the half-lighted galleries which now nominally show but do not truly display the finest canvases of the French schools. The Louvre itself hardly contains more Poussons than the Hermitage, yet on the present occasion it is, alas, not possible to go beyond the mere notation of this fact. Charles Le Brun, the incarnation of the Louis-Quatorze style, not less in monumental decoration than in painting, is here, as is also Eustache Le Lueur. Pierre Mignard, Le Brun's acrimonious rival, may be studied in three of his most important canvases, "*La Mort de Cleopâtre*," "*Le Retour de Jephthé*" (Private Apartments), and "*La Magnanimité d'Alexandre le Grand*." Again, Jean-François de Troy is to be seen in some of his most ambitious and elaborate efforts, including two separate versions of "*Susanne au Bain*," and a large "*Loth et ses filles*." But we are advancing too far in point of time, and forgetting one of the great glories of the Hermitage, the celebrated series of landscapes by Claude le Lorrain, which from Cassel and La Malmaison found their way into the Hermitage. These are "*Le Matin*," "*Le Midi*," "*Le Soir*," and "*La Nuit*." It is unfortunately very difficult, in the badly lighted gallery in which they are placed, to appreciate at their true worth either these or the other Claudes included in the collection.

Watteau, the most enchanting poet-painter of an age which—in France at least—was mainly one of bright, elastic and elegant prose, is well represented, though not with anything like the completeness with which his art is illustrated in the royal and public collections of Berlin and Potsdam, and in the Wallace collection. Here are two of the most famous among the quite early works, the "*Fatigues de la Guerre*" and "*Délassements de la*

Guerre," both of them from the collection of Crozat, Baron de Thiers. Much finer and better preserved than either of these, in the same early style, is the military scene engraved in the great *Recueil de Julienne* as "Le Camp Volant," and described in the Goncourts' *Catalogue Raisonné*, as "d'après le tableau que Watteau avait fait pour le sieur Sirois peu après sa seconde arrivée de Flandres." This picture the writer had the good fortune to see and recognize in one of the private corridors of the Hermitage under the name of Pater. The name of Watteau's same pupil and fellow-townsmen is attached to a little piece in the Serge Stroganoff collection, which from a too cursory examination appeared to the writer to be also an early Watteau, and perhaps the picture engraved by C. Cochin as the "Détachement faisant Halte." Strangely enough there *are* two exquisite little Paters in the Imperial collection, and these are not catalogued as such, but bear a false name, so obscure that the writer has omitted to note it. The quaint "Savoyard avec sa Marmotte" has been rendered popular by the engraving of B. Audran. The exquisite painter of *Fêtes Galantes* is at his finest in the fantastic and delightful "Mezzetin," in which is presented a nocturnal serenade by this amorous personage of the Comédie Italienne. The sovereign charm by which the Valenciennes master is able to gild with the rays of true poetry the conventional scenes and figures of the busy Italian comedy—thus endowing them with a new and ideal existence—is here very strongly felt. By Lancret, too, there are some charming things, including "Le Concert," "Les Jeunes Oiseleurs," and "Femme au Bain." But the most charming (now or lately to be found in the Private Apartments) is assuredly the "Portrait de Mademoiselle Camargo," an original repetition of the celebrated picture in the Wallace collection. There the captivating dancer poses in a ballet costume of white and blue; in the Hermitage example she is in a similarly fashioned dress, carried out, however, in brownish yellow and rose-pink. One Boucher only, the very curious "Repos en Egypte," dated 1757, shows the hand of the Pompadour's court painter, whom we are accustomed to associate with scenes of a very different order. Chardin is present with repetitions of "Le Bénédicité" and "La Blanchisseuse," Fragonard with a broadly brushed "Intérieur d'une Maison de Paysan," his sister-in-law, Marguerite Gérard, with two paintings in that style of finish—borrowed from the



least attractive and least characteristic phase of Fragonard's art—which the French style *léché*. Greuze appears with a "Tête de jeune Fille," two portraits, and one of those falsely and repellantly sentimental subjects, so characteristic of the man and the moment, entitled "La Mort du Paralytique."\* No less than seventeen "Ports de Mer," "Paysages," and "Tempêtes" represent the art—at its best, delicate in tone and accomplished in execution—of Claude-Joseph Vernet.

The English school is illustrated at the Hermitage by seven pictures only; yet, even thus it is more highly honored than in most of the public galleries of the Continent. The "Portrait of Oliver Cromwell," by Robert Walker, is a sketch for a larger picture. The "Portrait of Abraham van der Doort," by Van Dyck's pupil, Dobson, is especially interesting as presenting the industrious artist who was the custodian of Charles the First's artistic treasures, and left behind him a catalogue of them which, notwithstanding its imperfections, is of inestimable value. By Sir Godfrey Kneller are the portraits of two Englishmen of renown, the philosopher, John Locke, and the sculptor and wood-carver, Grinling Gibbons. Sir Joshua Reynolds cannot be said to show at his best in this gallery, where his canvases hang dangerously near to the unrivalled series of Rembrandts. The three pictures for which he is responsible are all of them of some celebrity, yet of the richness, the variety, the fascination of his art they give little or no idea. That vast canvas, "The Infant Hercules Strangling the Serpent," was a commission from Catherine II., "Empress and Autocratrix of all the Russias," and she paid for her "high art" in true imperial fashion with the sum of fifteen hundred guineas, the biggest price ever obtained by Reynolds for a picture. Most graciously, too, she added to the agreed sum a gold box with her cipher in diamonds. It must be owned that in such empty and inflated attempts at great art as these canvases in the Hermitage, Reynolds and his followers were absolutely unsatisfactory, infinitely inferior, indeed, to the contemporary French painters, who even in their most frigidly academic performances proved that they had built upon a solid basis of precept and example. The Englishmen, so superior to their French brothers in art in many of the qualities which go to make up the

\* The Imperial Academy of Arts at St. Petersburg preserves a vast collection of drawings and studies by Greuze.

great painter, here never found their feet. Less worthy still of the artist than the elaborate picture which was produced in response to Catherine's liberality is "The Continnence of Scipio." The "Snake in the Grass" or "Cupid Detaching the Girdle of Venus," is one of three versions of the subject, and not the best of them. Another is in the National Gallery, and a third, the most brilliant in color of the three, in the collection of Lord Burton at Chesterfield House.

A survey of the paintings by old masters in the Russian capital would not be complete without some account of the private collections, which cannot, nevertheless, be so much as attempted on the present occasion. The gallery of Count Serge Stroganoff in the Newski Prospect containing authentic examples of Gentile da Fabriano, Botticelli, and Filippino Lippi, a magnificent "Head of a Youth" by Boltraffio, under the name of Leonardo da Vinci, two superb Rembrandts, and two exceedingly fine pendant portraits dating from the early time of Van Dyck, which have already been mentioned in the course of these remarks. The sumptuous Yousoupoff Palace holds, with many late Italian and many French paintings of great value, a most interesting "Portrait of a Lady," belonging to the earlier time of Lorenzo Lotto, in which the sitter, though she is much more decently attired, bears a very striking resemblance to the "Fornarina" of the Barberini Palace at Rome. Its two magnificent and altogether exceptional Rembrandts of the very late time were among the greatest examples of the master to be seen in the Amsterdam Exhibition of 1898. The collection of Count Davidoff gains celebrity from a majestic name and false signature of Giovanni Bellini displays also an ad-and touching "Christ" by the same master-hand, and under the mirable "St. Jerome" by Cima da Conegliano, which may compare on equal terms with the representations of the same subject contained in the National Gallery and the Brera of Milan. Lastly, the house of M. Semenoff—a recognized authority on Netherlandish art—is filled from floor to roof with examples of the lesser Dutch masters, among which are to be found many things of interest to the connoisseur and the specialist.

CLAUDE PHILLIPS.